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***Kernan, Peterson announce support for
Hoosiers to pursue new biotech degree***

*Advance Indiana grant targets current life science company employees;
Biotech Bound will help at-risk students get degree, provide comprehensive services*

Gov. Joseph Kernan today presented a \$500,000 **Advance Indiana** grant to help employees of 11 life sciences companies pursue associate's degrees in biotechnology, which are being offered for the first time by two Indiana colleges.

"The opportunity for our workers to earn a biotech degree strengthens our competitive edge in one of the world's most important and fastest-growing industries," Kernan said while presenting the grant to the Indiana Health Industry Forum.

"It means that life sciences companies can count on our workers having the skills they need, and just as importantly, it gives Hoosiers the chance to pursue a career in an industry that is key to our state's economic future."

Joining the governor, Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson announced the new **Biotech Bound** program, which will assist young adults who face social and educational barriers who want to pursue a biotech degree. The Indianapolis Private Industry Council, Inc., created the four-year pilot program.

"Biotech Bound will give at-risk students a chance for a strong future," Peterson said. "By developing a career in the life sciences sector, students will not only be qualified for good, high-paying jobs, but also will play an important role in our state's economic future."

IHIF and four partner life sciences companies – Eli Lilly and Company, Roche Diagnostics Corp., Dow AgroSciences and Baxter Pharmaceutical Solutions– helped develop the associate's degree in biotechnology, working with Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis and Ivy Tech State College. Both schools offer the degree, including at six of Ivy Tech's campuses - Bloomington, Evansville, Indianapolis, Lafayette, South Bend and Terre Haute.

"This new degree demonstrates IUPUI's commitment to support the growth of the life sciences in Indiana and our desire to meet the needs of the industry," IUPUI Chancellor Charles R. Bantz said. "With the help of industry partners, our faculty and staff quickly developed a specialized biotech program to support the future of Indiana's economy and to provide solid career opportunities for students."

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“At the core of Ivy Tech State College’s mission is offering courses, programs and services that meet the diverse and changing needs of our community,” Ivy Tech-Central Indiana Chancellor Dr. Carol D’Amico said. “The development of this biotechnology program, through the partnership with private and public organizations, is a perfect example of how we can achieve our mission, and the model for how we plan to continue to provide programs that meet the needs of this community.”

The Advance Indiana grant will make it possible for about 134 current employees of 11 life sciences companies to pursue an associate’s degree in biotechnology at either IUPUI or Ivy Tech. The companies include the four who helped develop the degree, as well as seven other who joined the partnership: Bioanalytical Systems, Inc.; Cook Biotech; Cook Pharmica; GDS Technology Division of Standbio Laboratory; GFI Research Center; Memorial Health Systems and Pfizer, Inc.

“It’s a real testament to the strength of this state’s commitment to life sciences, both the public and private sectors, that these companies – who compete against each other every day – would come together like this,” said Wade Lange, IHIF’s president. “We are thrilled about this partnership, as well as the state’s support and look forward to the strong pool of life sciences workers it will create.”

The grant will pay for tuition, books and fees. As well, all credits Ivy Tech students earn for the degree can count toward a bachelor’s degree at IUPUI and IU Bloomington

Through Biotech Bound, IPIC, the Workforce Investment Board for Marion County, will help 50 at-risk young adults pursue associate’s degrees in biotechnology or other life sciences fields. Up to 10 students will begin the program in January, followed by 20 more in September 2005 and 20 in January 2006. Biotech Bound will pay for tuition, books, fees and supportive services such as remediation, mentoring and internships. At least 30 of the students will be recruited for the biotech degree programs.

“Biotech Bound blends two goals important to many in our community: It sets at-risk young adults on a career path to self-sufficiency and it provides skilled workers desperately needed by growing businesses,” said Joanne Joyce, president and chief executive officer of IPIC. “If we can achieve those goals, our entire community benefits.”

IPIC is seeking funding partners for the program, which is expected to provide more than \$1 million in tuition and services.

Kernan also announced that IHIF has been awarded \$20,800 through **Indiana@Work**. The funds will pay for five profiles of job categories commonly found throughout the life sciences industry. At the same time, 500 Hoosiers will receive skills assessments. Once completed, those individuals will be matched with available jobs, based on their assessments and the job requirements determined by the profiling.

The Advance Indiana grant program and Indiana@Work are both administered by the Indiana Department of Workforce Development.

IHIF is a nonprofit, private sector initiative devoted to enhancing the economic growth and development of the health industry in Indiana. It is a private-public alliance of manufacturers, health care providers, educational institutions and service providers whose mission is to make Indiana a premier location for the creation and growth of health industry enterprises.

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